

FIG. 29, the distance traveled by the coupler during the full buff stroke may exceed the 4.25 inches of buff travel provided by the draft gear assembly. The expression "full buff position" should be understood to encompass a coupler buff stroke of 4-1/4 to 4-3/4 inches.

It should also be understood that the dimensions, lengths and distances set forth above are nominal ones. Normal manufacturing tolerances may vary these dimensions, lengths and distances. Dimensions, lengths and distances stated in this description and in the claims should be understood to include variations due to normal tolerances. In addition, unless expressly set forth in the claims, the invention is not limited to any particular dimension, length or distance.

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Compression setting of the resilient members 28, 30, may affect the length of the draft stroke and buff stroke. Accordingly, references to the length of the buff or draft stroke of any part in the claims should be understood as referring to a design value, a value that may change over time with use and wear. Thus, reference to a full draft position or draft stroke of 1-1/4 inches should be understood as including positions and draft strokes that vary from this length with compression set and loss of pre-load.

Throughout buff movement of the draft system coupler and yoke, there is no contact between the coupler pin or key 52, 59, and the yoke 24F, 24E, 24R. The coupler pin or key 52, 59 is thus not stressed during buff movement of the yoke 24F, 24E, 24R. It is only during draft movement of the yoke that the yoke contacts the coupler pin or key.

IN THE CLAIMS:

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Please substitute claim 1 as follows for that currently pending:

1. (amended) A draft gear assembly for use with railcars having coupler members, the draft gear assembly having front and back ends and comprising:

a yoke having a back wall, a top wall extending from the back wall toward the front end of the draft gear assembly, and a bottom wall extending from the back wall toward the front end of the draft gear assembly;

a coupler follower positioned between the back wall of the yoke and the front end of the draft gear assembly;

at least one front resilient member positioned between the coupler follower and the back wall of the yoke;